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P R E S S R E L E A S E

INDONESIAN HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGNER PREVENTED FROM ATTENDING UN HUMAN RIGHTS SUB-COMMISSION

Indonesia's leading human rights campaigner, Haji J.C. Princen has been refused an exit permit to come to Geneva to attend the UN Human Rights Sub-Commission which is now in session.

Haji Princen, Director of the Jakarta-based Institute for the Defence of Human Rights, was mandated by the Regional Council on Human Rights in Asia to testify at the Sub-Commission about the massacre of villagers in Lampung, South Sumatra last February and about the deteriorating human rights situation in East Timor which was invaded by Indonesia in 1975.

Twenty non-governmental organisations, including the International Commission of Justice have strongly protested to the Indonesian Government for preventing Haji Princen from leaving Indonesia to attend the Sub-Commission.

The Sub-Commission is due to consider a resolution this week on the human rights situation in East Timor. The draft calls attention to arrests, torture and summary executions reported in East Timor since late last year, and calls on the Indonesian Government to permit international human rights organisations to visit the territory. Organisations like Amnesty International and the New York-based Asia Watch have never been given access to East Timor.

In a statement read out at the Sub-Commission yesterday on Haji Princen's behalf, the Sub-Commission was urged to adopt the resolution. "Its failure to do so last year," the statement said, "helped spread the belief that human rights violations do not occur in East Timor."

The draft resolution is co-sponsored by Sub-Commission members from the UK, Norway, Greece, Mexico and Japan.

Geneva, 30 August 1989